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THE RIFT IN THE CLOUD

JOHN S. WRIGHTNOUR





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THE RIFT IN THE CLOUD

SONGS OF LOVE AND FAITH

BY
JOHN S. WRIGHTNOUR



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To all who have loved (and who has not?) and who, having loved, perhaps have lost, or missed the full fruition, and who would see a rift in the clouds, revealing the blue sky of God above, the following verses are dedicated.

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THE RIFT IN THE CLOUD

THE TOUCH WHICH MAKES PERFECT

THERE never was a song so sweet
In music, rhyme, or metre
That needed not some touch of tears
To make the music sweeter.

THERE never was a sermon grand,
With noble words sonorous,
That needed not our penitence
To bring the Lord before us.

THERE never was a life so pure —
To be in heaven greeted —
But it was hurt by sinners here
To have its charm completed.

COMPENSATION

O TROUBLED soul, when thunders roll,
When skies are overcast,
The sound of dread, the flash o'erhead,
Announce, "The stroke is past."

When light of day is far away,
Earth turneth, as at first,
And every night one half is light,—
The night is day reversed.

Fear not to go, though naught you know
Of what the way may be;
Each wandering brook in tangled nook
Will some day reach the sea.

The nestling tossed in wind and frost
That, shivering, opes its mouth
Finds mother-love on bough above,—
Will some day find the south.

SEVENTEEN AND TWENTY-ONE

WE sit with cheeks together,
While sunny is the weather,
And this is rapture keen,—
For she is seventeen,
And I am twenty-one.

Her cheeks are as a peach is —
Are soft and rosy peaches ;
Her lips, a baby's, soft,
And warm and moist, I've quaffed —
For I her love have won !

Her breath comes sweet and rapid ;
All other hours are vapid ;
And warm and white on mine
Her temples press, divine,—
And she's my darling one.

Her eyelids down are drooping,
As I above am stooping ;
Her round white arms I hold,
Around my neck enfold,
Until the day is done.

And as her gentle bosom
Is heaving, "not to lose him,"
Meanwhile my heart must throb,
As tender lips I rob
Of kisses, every one.

With white and taper fingers
Her hand in mine still lingers,
For oh, I love her, Dear —
Can heaven come so near
To two that are as one?

As lips to her's are pressing,
Our deepest love expressing,
So red and soft and tender,
May Love all blessings send her
Beneath the shining sun!

Her long and silken tresses
Fall over my caresses,
Entwining with each kiss
The silken threads of bliss
'Round hearts so sweetly one.

And these are golden hours,
And every one is ours;
No love like ours is seen,
For she is seventeen,
And I am twenty-one.

LOVE IS LIFE

THE ground was dull and gray and sad,
And only shrivelled seeds it had;
Earth lay all cold, in sheet of snow,
For Frost was king below;
But Life passed by and touched her,
And with violets blue her face became lovely
and new,
And the blossoms of May were fragrant and gay.
And she blushed into roses of June.
While song birds and noon and she are in tune,
There are humming birds' wings; all nature
sings,
While in robe of green and with lakelet's sheen
She has passed on her way into summer.

Dear one, your life was gray and sad;
The seeds of shrivelled hopes it had;
Your heart was cold, in robe of snow,
And Pride was king below;
But Love passed by — and touched you,
And like violets blue your eyes into tenderness
grew;
With the blossoms of May your bosom was gay,
And you blushed like the roses in June;
For song birds and June and you were in tune.
And with humming birds' wings, each heart-beat
sings,
While in love's own sheen all nature is seen
As you dance on your way into Summer!

A WIFE TO HER HUSBAND

WHILE years pass slowly by,
And winters round us lie,
My cloak is always nigh,
My Dear, to wrap thee with, to wrap thee with.

Before thy love awoke,
Before of love you spoke,
My heart was just a cloak,
My Dear, to wrap thee in, to wrap thee in.

So years have passed away;
And all the years still say,
"Each day is just a day,
My Dear, to shield thee in, to shield thee in."

Though all the hours be drear,
If death were drawing near,
My life is ever here,
My Dear, to wrap thee with, to wrap thee with.

When all thine hours are gay
With flatterers alway,
My laugh is just a way,
My Love, to bid thee stay, to bid thee stay.

When foes thine actions probe,
Thy patience try — as Job —
My trust is like a robe,
My Dear, to wrap thee in, to wrap thee in.

When troubles 'round us fly,
Though penury be nigh,
My sigh is just a sigh
For Love to wrap thee in, to wrap thee in.

If other arms enfold,—
To them, thy strength be sold,—
My outstretched arms I hold,
My Dear, to *hold* thee with, to hold thee with.

In days of absence cold,
When love is growing old,
Sweet memories I hold,
My Dear, to fold thee in, to fold thee in.

When age has left its snow
On frosted heads below,
My heart with warmth shall glow,
My Dear, to wrap thee in, to wrap thee in.

A MOONLIT NIGHT

ON high the silent moon of God,
A desolated world,
An airless, lifeless, empty clod,
Around the earth is whirled,

While in this quiet summer night
A radiance fills the scene,
And in the soft reflected light
Are areas of green.

I read to-night a message here
For every stricken soul
That would, unwatered by a tear,
In spheres of duty roll.

I seem to see her barren hills,
Her long unwatered plains,
Which silence, never broken, fills,
Where loss eternal reigns;

While on that sad and silent shore
The blazing sunlight lies,
On realms of blight, with nevermore
The charm of balmy skies.

No soul of beauty so devoid,
Or burnt by fiercest wrath,
If it but let itself be void,
Itself was void of wrath,

But it was made a glorious thing,
And lit a larger world
With softer rays than those that bring
The sunshine of that world!

And if thy face hath not the light
That other faces have;
If thou draw not one planet bright,
But be of one the slave,

Then, by the slavery of love
Be thou its dearest light,
And it will deem thee from above,
Because thou com'st at night!

THE DEAD CINDER IN THE SKY

No angry sea hath lain beneath
The pallid moon afraid,
Though waves were high, with stormy seethe,
But these her power swayed.

No soul so desolate or dead,
Or tearless, moanless, dumb,
If it but went where God hath led
It led some troubled soul to come.

So patiently all pain endure;
Go as thy Saviour went,
Reflecting all in silence pure,
On God's strange will intent.

Some Magdalen in tears will be,
Because through thee was shed
The love of God; 'twas wrath to thee,
As thou beneath it fled!

No longing soul can look aloft
And see the orbs above,
But they, in tears reflected soft,
Will seem a face of love:

And so, O sacrificial soul,
Some hearts will rise to thee
As through the weary months thou roll,
Who find their charm in thee!

And if thou must in sorrow go,
Go as thy Lord hath given;
And many hearts will name thee low
One of the stars of heaven!

LOVE THE GIFT IS

“FOR God so loved, He gave,”
And true love always gives;
He gave that He might save,
And love, by saving, lives;
Itself, for saving, gives.

Love's essence is to give,
And giving is Divine;
In saving others, live;
A “living” God is thine,
A God of Love Divine.

For love a mother lives,
And that her child receive,
Herself she gladly gives;
Such gift of God believe,
Such gift from God receive.

The sun on all will shine;
It gives to all their light;
There is a Sun Divine,
For “God Himself is light,”
And He will give thee light.

And “God Himself is Love,”
And love is heavenly light
All other lights above;
And love is earth's best light,—
Our love will give us sight.

“For God so loved, He gave”;
The sun cannot but shine,
And giving warmth will save
That frozen soul of thine,
Each frozen soul divine.

He gives the earth its flowers,
Love answers back to Love;
In all our earthly bowers
Are singing birds of love
Who send their songs above.

THE LIGHTS OF TOWN

AMID the wind's wild rushes
The stars are gleaming down
O'er where, till morning blushes,
Uplook the lights of town.

Gleam down, O mighty world-fires,
On world-fires here below,
That rise as rise the church spires,—
The fires of Home below.

Those worlds there distant gleaming
In roaring flames above,
Burn for the men now dreaming
By all these fires of love!

Than these they are not greater,
Though mighty blazing suns,
All fires that the Creator
Burns for His "little ones."

And one true soul is vaster
Than vast material world,
Nor falling sun is such disaster
As soul from orbit whirled.

That soul hath power to measure
The paths of every star,
And longer is its pain or pleasure
Than lengths it measures are.

And Love on this small planet
And in this wind-swept town —
The ages cannot span it,
Nor set its numbers down.

Blow griefs in sudden rushes
While stars are sinking low,
But still, till Morning blushes,
Will burn God's lights below !

IN THE MIDST OF THE DAY

A TIMID rap at my office door;
 " What do you want, my child? "
Comes a whisper the threshold o'er,
 " Only to be *with* you, Pa,
 Only to be with *you*."

All tired with toil in the place of play,
 Life that is weary work,
To Thy presence we come and pray:
 " Only to be *with* you, Father,
 Only to be with *you*."

When tired and worn with the cares of life,
 Business, and " fret " and " stew,"
To thy chamber I come, my love,
 Only to be *with* you, dear,
 Only to be with *you*.

So we sometimes to the Silence go,
 " What do you want, my child? "
And we answer Him, faint and low,
 " Only to be rested, Lord,
 Only to be with *thee*."

FRAGRANCE DIVINE

No flower has come into blooming
But a fragrance surrounded the beauty;
No task has its place been assuming
But a love was surrounding the duty;
And a duty surrounded by loving is beauty.

And never a prayer is deceiving,
For a Love is surrounding the longing;
Like weavers our patterns we're weaving,
And the visions unreached are thronging,
But the longing is fragrant with One we are
wronging.

No life, though weary with striving,
Not contented with aimlessly roaming,
But feels a new fragrance arriving,
And the Master appears in the gloaming;
For our "roaming" for Love is the Master's
coming.

No bird on its tree-top is singing so sweetly
But a note just as sweet is another's,
No poet has sung so completely
But a music uncaught is his brother's,
But no other has note like their love for the
others.

Its fragrance is more than of roses,
And its melody more than is singing;
The heart of the rose it discloses,
And the bird into heaven is winging,
And the roses of heaven their fragrance are
bringing.

LIFE'S FAIREST CASTLE

UP to the moat ride a joyous throng,
To a castle inviting entrance;
Hearts are all light, and each will is strong;
“This is the place we have long desired;
This is the rest of the worn and tired,”
In a castle which has no entrance.

“This is the key to the lands of health,
And a castle of widest entrance,
This is the guard of the homes of wealth.
Fair is this land of the goodly wine;
Love is the fruit of its growing vine”
By the castle which has no entrance.

So o'er the moat have they swiftly crossed
To the castle inviting entrance;
All that they had, to be there, have lost,
For the grim ruler demands his fee;
“Leave at the moat of thine all for me,”
By the castle which has no entrance.

Tired are the fingers that the casements grasp
At the castle refusing entrance,
Searching the doorway of stone for hasp,
While the sweet voice of a lady dear
Quickens the throbbing of hearts that hear
By the castle which has no entrance.

So in impatience they throng the gate
Of the castle which has no entrance;
Long are the years that they stand and wait,
As in wild fancy they hear her feet —
Only the echo of hearts which beat
At the castle which has no entrance.

Tears of a hope long deferred, still drop
By the castle which knows no entrance;
Sad are the longings which never stop,
While to a stream that is flowing on
Tear after teardrop is rolling on
From the castle which has no entrance.

LIFE'S RIVER

THOU hast come to a bright world, maiden,
To banks of sunlit green,
Where the waves of life glide on
Amid each wondrous scene.

Thou hast come to a glad stream, maiden —
A skiff that holds but one —
Thou wilt float amid lilies there
And crush them one by one.

There are throngs to escort thee, maiden,
Though throngs will pass thee by,
And the waves but lightly rise
That bathe a lower sky.

Oh, how fairy-like seemeth, Ella,
Thy life's reflected sky,
Yet 'tis only muddy earth
Where sunken vessels lie.

They are sinking around thee, daughter,
In waves that send thee on,
So the glad go on, as glad,
O'er multitudes gone down.

Though the throngs are about thee, girlie,
Soon all the storm will shun,
And they all must save themselves —
Their boats can hold but one.

But our God is above, my darling,
He lets no children fall,
And His arms enfold us each,
His vessel holds us all.

TO ONE IN HEAVEN

HAST thou passed by the Throne, beloved,
 (Where softly angels go)
On the sparkle of living waters
 That as clear as a crystal flow?

Dost thou sail by the radiant lilies
 That float in heaven's dew?
Dost thou sail in white shallops of peace
 'Neath a sky of celestial blue?

On that limitless stream, beloved,
 That river of life for aye,
With its islands of beauty, and bowers
 For thy rest as thou sailest by,

Dost thou sail unto fair horizons
 Beneath a radiant Cross,
In the light of the numberless sun rays
 Of the forms that are flitting across?

Dost thou sail by life's trees, beloved,
 That line those banks of green,
In the light of the Glory above,
 And the light of thine eyes serene?

Do the loved and the lost, beloved,
 Beside thee sail to-day?
Do the gondoliers sing of love, I wonder,
 Of the love of the far-away?

Ah, who knows! But I know that thou, be-
loved,

Art not on that stream alone,
And the love-light in thine eyes, beloved,
Is the love-light from the Throne.

DEATH

FROM an Alpine glacier melting
There flowed an ice-cold stream,
And a traveler fell in its waters
And was borne, with a startled scream,

Through a yawning icy tunnel
Beneath a mile of snow!
With a gasp in the dark he was carried
Through the roar and the fear and woe.

In a moment he was out in the sunlight,
In whirl and toss and flow,
In the beautiful vale of Chamouni,
Where the trees and the flowers grow,

Where the sunlight kisses the meadow,
And bees and zephyrs are,
In the beautiful vale of Chamouni
From that chasm of dark despair.

Through the chasm of death, beloved,
(A gasp — then silence low)
Thou wast borne from our yearning vision
Through the black, cold, tunnel below.

But a moment — then out in the sunlight
To radiant beauty borne,
Far away from the freezing shadow
Thou hast found the celestial morn.

MY BABY IN THE SNOW

(A mother speaks)

Beyond the frozen window pane
The silent snowflakes fall,
And now, in gusts of wind, again
The waving fingers call.

How can a little baby bear
That burden of the snow,
As o'er the graveyard, in the air
The whirling snowflakes go?

In wraiths of snow I see once more
The little running feet
That met me at the open door
With childish welcome sweet.

Again I lift up in my arms
That throbbing little head,
So often, from the lamplight's charms,
Unwilling borne to bed.

Beneath the snow-white coverlid
The fevered body lay;
How differently his form is hid
Beneath the snow to-day!

For God has borne that little head
From clinging arms of ours,
And laid it in a snowy bed
To wait for summer's flowers.

And from the unused drawer I take
His dusty little toys;
Oh my! What memories awake
Of baby's little joys!

And as in tears I set them here,
A trumpet and a drum,
I hear him sound them forth, and cheer,
And bid the soldiers come!

And in my pain I think, some day
An angel's trump will sound,
Though we be near, or far away,
And bid the baby come!

Oh, soon may blue-eyed violets grow
Upon that little mound,
Where eyes of blue are closed below,
So still, beneath the ground.

He is not there, not there, not there —
I cannot make it so!
He lies in daisied meadows fair
Away from winter's snow!

And as in spring the flowers come,
Uprising from the sod,
My "resurrection flower" will bloom,
And turn to me and God.

BY MY DEAD

'Tis the bed where my dead is lying,
And the air o'er her hair is sighing,
O'er the lilies, white lilies, lying
 Clasped in her frigid fingers;
With the curtain uncertain, swaying,
While the gloom of the room is laying
O'er my heart its sad heart, and saying,
 " Now for the tomb she lingers."

And the curtain uncertain, swaying
In the wind, " Have you sinned? " is saying,
" That she died by thy side? " I am staying
 Here on the earth, to love her.
Moist tuberose (while there dozes yon sleeper)
And this rain, like my pain, beweeper her,
And my heart, aching heart, would keep her
 Here, from the skies above her.

In the lips, pallid lips, no breath is;
Limbs are nerveless and swerveless as death is;
Moveless feet, no more fleet! What all saith is,
 " *Life* has the pain and crying."
Thy years — twenty; there were plenty to love
 you,
And all years shed their tears above you;
Dost thou hear me say near thee, " I love you;
 Love is more real than dying? "

In the gloom of the room the taper
Has grown dim; my eyes swim; they drape her
In white laces, fair graces, to shape her
 Soon for the tomb that holdeth.
Will you know where you go, my dearest,
That my soul, with the whole and nearest
Of my life, yea, of life the dearest,
 Dwells where it thee enfoldeth?

Where you go I will go, to bless you,
Though for gloom of the tomb they dress you;
You shall know, where you go, I caress you —
 Kissed where the seraphs hover;
For the love gone above, than this is,
Is far stronger — and longer its blisses —
And completer and sweeter its kisses,
 Than of an earth-bound lover!

THE TRYST

ALONG the outer pavement
The lighted rooms he nears,
And at a nearby window
Her girlish voice he hears;
And in that outer darkness
He stands, in silence dim,
To hear an angel speaking
Whose speech is not for him.

When by that selfsame window
They placed her form one day,
And in the darkened chamber
The pure white lilies lay,
And scented silence brooded over
Still lip and quiet lid,
He passed from out the darkness,
With love no longer hid;
And by that open window
He stood beside the dead,
Beside the girlish figure,
Beside the pillowed head,
The white veil of her bridal,
The satin-slippered feet.
And there he softly told her,
“ You never knew, my sweet,
You never knew I loved you.”
And then, in silence meet,

Within the shadows standing,
His lips lay on her hand,
While vagrant summer breezes
The lonely trysting fanned.

One waxen tuberose only
Lay in the dark brown hair,
While moveless on her bosom
Was one white lily there;
The thin, white, girlish fingers
Were folded in the gloom;
The softly swaying curtains
Were fluttering in the room.
“ You would not chide me, darling,
You would not, could you know,
For you is all of heaven,
For me, my love below ! ”

AS FLOWERS DO

AN eye of violet's blue,
A brow of lily's snow,
A neck that locks twine o'er
Like vines in evening dew,
A face that blooms as flowers do —
A face she sees no more.

The breeze of early morn,
And then the evening dew,
A grave that blooms as flowers do —
A face she sees no more.

The breath of hope at morn,
And sympathy like dew —
Her life will bloom as flowers do,
But that dead face no more.

A cheek with rosy glow,
A brow like hawthorn hoar,
A kiss like evening dew.
Her heart has bloomed as flowers do ;
She sees his face no more.

A little eye of blue,
A cheek of lily snow,
Her love has bloomed as flowers do —
She sees his face no more.

In little eyes the blue,
With lips — the rose at morn —
All these have bloomed as flowers do,
Like his she sees no more.

In fields with violets blue,
By streams where lilies grow,
Her pathway blooms with flowers new,
But his will bloom no more.

Now in her hair the snow,
In aged lips the blue,
No more to bloom as flowers do,
His face comes back once more.

That eye of violet's blue,
That brow of lily's snow,
That lip like rose of morn,
The neck the locks fell o'er
Like vines in evening dew,
The face that bloomed as flowers do —
A face she sees once more.

.

In her wan lips the snow,
In her dead cheeks the snow —
No more to bloom as flowers do —
Like his she sees no more.

The drifting snow at morn,
And snow for evening dew ;
Their graves will bloom as flowers do —
Their faces bloom no more.

THE CROSS BEHIND OUR CROSSES

A FRAGILE CROSS,
A little cross,
Of faded moss,
With twining filaments that lie across
An album leaf whereon it once was green,
That tells me still of one long, long, unseen.

O little cross
Of fragile moss,
You tell of loss,
Of faded threads
Of early love
And early loss,
And of the dead's
Fair life above,
Where bending heads
Revere His love,—
Before His cross
Adore a love
That knows no loss
Or change — across
All lapse of years.
So let no tears
Fall on this cross
Of fragile moss.

A sparkling cross,
A jewelled cross,
That doth emboss
The fair white bosom that it lies across.
Once knowing naught of care, nor feeling pain,
That breast now throbs to sorrow's old refrain.

That jewelled cross
Has turned to dross,
And heavy grows
On burdened heart
The cross of pain.
As slowly rose
That heavy cross
Of grief and loss,
A trembling heart
Hath learned to know
How to His cross
And to His love
Our life may go,
And look above ;
And through His pain,
And through His cross,
And by His loss,
Be glad again.

A splendid cross,
A marble cross,
Where willows toss,
And light and shade steal silently across
A grave where all around is fair and green
And grasses grow above a face unseen.

O marble cross,
Thy shade across
My life doth fall!
It tells of loss,
Recalling all;
When lo, a cross
It brings to view,
A wooden cross,
O soul, for you;
And stretched across
Are arms of love
So dear, so true!
And in its shade,
As falls the dew,
Let sorrow fade
And comfort fall,
Because that love
Remembers all.

O wooden cross
Of pain and loss,
O hard rough cross,
As on thy roughened beams are stretched across
Those arms of pity and of mercy ever —
Those arms which hold, rejecting never, never,
All else grows dim,
The marble, gold,
And we see Him,
Once stark and cold!
In the embrace
Of those wide arms
We hide our face
In all our loss,
And all alarms —
Each earthly love
As frail as moss,
Each jewelled love
Or cross of fame —
All fade, but Thou
Art still the same,
While all, all bow
Before this cross,
This wooden cross!

AUTUMN LEAVES

THE poet said:

“ Only a month since the leaves were seen,
Their foliage all of the loveliest green,
A single night, a touch of frost,
And so the life of the leaves is lost;
And they whisper sadly, and softly sigh,
‘ Growing beautiful — only to die.’ ”

And I thought:

“ It has not been long since our mother was
young,
As fair as the fairest she moved among;
Then sorrow came, like a touch of frost,
And the freshness and glow of her youth was
lost;
But a beauty came to the aged face
Of chastened peace and of Christian grace:
And she moved more slowly as life went by,
Growing beautiful — only to die.”

The poet said:

“ Gather the leaves with the tenderest care;
Each hue that is seen in the rainbow is there.
But death was needed before we found
That the tinted leaves, now lying around,
Were full of beauties not brought to light
Till after their life had taken flight.”

And I said:

“Lift up the dead with the tenderest care;
That aged saint who is lying there
Lived with the hues of unfailing love
Soft on her face, as in realms above,
And death was needed before we found
With what wondrous grace her life had been
 crowned,
That 'twas full of beauties not brought to
 light
Till after her life had taken flight.”

A GRAVE

HERE in the quiet summer night,
Where moonlight floods the graves,
Lies one beneath the silver light
Whose peace the landscape laves,
Who long has slept in silence there —
Whose early years of Day,
Like ripples in a sunny air,
Made all the hours gay;
But for long years, when youth had fled,
In peace still moved below,
As now upon her quiet bed
The moonbeams come and go.

THREE CROSSES ON GOLGOTHA

I

UPON this cross,
This hard, rough cross,
My aching head
Doth droop like lead.

These arms are racked with cruel punishment!
For what great sin is there such suffering sent?
I lived my life. 'Twas only nature's bent,
And no great sin for which to be so rent.

This is no Christ!
Let Him come down
And save me now
If He be Christ!
Then all the town
Would crown His brow:
He cannot save,
Or why should He
Permit the grave
To swallow me?
Within life's span
There's many a man
Were worse than I!
My tortured feet
That were so fleet
Still spurn your force,
As here I curse
My fate, and die —
On this Golgotha die!

Upon a cross,
 A hard, rough cross,
 A thorn-pierced brow
 Is drooping now,
 And open arms of love are stretched across
 To hold within their wide and long embrace
 Each suffering heart of all our sinning race,
 To bear for each his sin and shame and loss.

In pain and thirst,
 Anguished, accurst,
 In loneliness
 And sore distress,
 Forsaken, He
 Doth bear for thee
 Thy penalty!
 The blood drops fall
 For thee, for all.
 O penitent,
 He prays for thee;
 With anguish rent
 He dies for thee
 In midnight gloom.
 These piercèd feet
 Were once full fleet
 With help to come!
 Behold Him sigh,
 In triumph cry,
 And on Golgotha die!

III

Upon this cross,
This hard, rough cross,
A sinner, I
For pardon cry!

These aching arms to Thee are opened wide,
Thou art my hope, altho' the world deride;
I call for succor to the crucified,
A sufferer Thou, yet monarch by my side!

I cry to Thee,
"Remember me,
O Lord, when Thou
A King shalt reign,
When on Thy brow,
Where now is pain,
Shall be the crown
Of life again!
I lay all down,
All sins of mine —
The grace is Thine!
With broken limbs,
As vision dims,
These wounded feet
Soon Thee shall greet;
Soon Paradise
Shall meet these eyes;
'Today, today,'
So didst Thou say!
Now let me die,
On THY Golgotha die!"

JUST ONCE

You may do the right for the thousandth time,
The world will never care;
Do wrong but once — just once —
You will hear of it everywhere.

You may climb the ladder a thousand times,
And none will ever know;
Then fall but once — just once —
And they all will behold you “go.”

You may travel upward a score of years,
And none may note your path;
Turn out but once — just once —
And the critics are filled with wrath.

Shall we not do right for the thousandth time,
Or climb the ladder still?
To fall is death, though once — but once —
And to climb is the Father's will.

'Tis the Father's will for the millionth time,
He ne'er would see you fall;
To stray but once — just once —
In the end may be loss of all.

It is not what the people may say, or do,
For none of them is Lord;
Still on and up — still up!
For the heights are your best reward.

HABAKKUK'S SONG OF FAITH

THROUGH the sea depth, with thine horses thou
trod'st thine onward way,
Through the surge of mighty waters thy pas-
sage onward lay!
When I heard thy name, a trembling did o'er
my body roll,
At the sound thereof a quiver upon my lips
there stole;
To my bones there comes decaying, I tremble in
my soul!
I in quiet must be waiting for trouble's day to
come,
The approaching of the people who soon upon
us come!
Though the fig tree shall not blossom, nor
grapes be on the vine,
Though the labor with the olive faileth, the
meadows yield no cheer,
From the fold the flock be driven, in stalls no
herds appear,—
Notwithstanding, in Jehovah rejoicing shall be
mine,
Round the God of my salvation my gladness
shall entwine;
For Jehovah in my weakness is my strengthen-
ing Divine,

And 'tis He shall make my footsteps like the
feet of mountain deer,

And 'tis He upon the mountains shall make my
pathway clear.

FAITH

O GOD, I float a dust spot in the dark,
Too coarse to see Thy 'whelming waves of light
That pass from space to space, whose depth
is height!

Earward I hold this shell of Faith and hark
To low deep ocean throbs, Thy heart blood's
course;

Then know — and see — Thy palace in this
deep,

Rarer than light, in rarer rays asleep,
With central high domed hall, the Universe,
Whose suns soft roll. My soul has floated on,
And, looking up, beholds the splendor of the
Great White Throne!

“ IF ”

If all the useless heartaches
 Were gathered into one,
If all the vain endeavors
 For prizes never won,
The yearnings of young mothers
 For each dead little one,
The yearnings of sad Davids
 O'er every Absalom,
The longings of the heart for answer
 From lips forever dumb,
The longings of the aged,
 Those longings never done,
If all the loves returned not,
 And all youth's vain desire,
If all sweet sacrifices
 Accepted by no fire,
If all the songs unuttered
 While broken wings aspire;
If these, so vain and tender,
 Were gathered into one,
Made true, and real, and lasting,
 Fulfilled for everyone,
'Twould be within our darkness
 The shining of the sun !

The softest breezes wander
 Over some *distant* land,

And still the heart grows fonder
Which sees no beckoning hand,
The feet of dreams meander
O'er some untrodden strand,
As when, of old, Leander
The angry billows scanned,
Nor saw the corpse which yonder
Would lie upon the sand;
And eager voyagers wander
And land on "No Man's Land"!

Yet was the ancient wise man,
Who said that all was vain,
That all was toil and trouble,
That pleasure was but pain,—
Was he the wiser prophet,
Or he who spake of gain
'Mid all of earth's disasters,
Who said that Love will reign,
That Love is still immortal,
The Love that conquers pain,—
And saw the radiant glory
Which cometh after rain?

If all the pain were pleasure,
If all our loss were gain;
If all our tears were treasure,
If Love has conquered pain;
We then could never measure
The glory of the rain.

If this transcendent glory
Transfigures all our pain,
This is the gospel story,—
That suffering is GAIN!

THE SECRET OF PURITY

HERE in this silent wooded place,
Where impure waters lie,
While dead leaves strew their face,
There looks up to the quiet sky,
Transmuting filth to fair pure grace
By roots which lie beyond the eye,
A water lily.

So, in thy quiet, humble place
Where earth's pollutions are,
While dead hopes fall apace,
As thou look'st up, see heaven afar,
Transmute thy life to heaven's grace
Through faiths that oft in secret are,
And be a lily.

THE HOMELESS DOVE

A WASTE of waters rolling on no shore,
Where long, long swellings evermore
Are borne by vagrant winds, are billows made —
A vast and soundless sepulchre of shade.
A dead and upturned face — a moment — when
'Tis seen to pass and disappear, and then
Only the billowy vastness wide again.
A world is dead below, cities and men,
While through their empty tenements there
swim
The monsters of the deep in darkness dim.

A vagrant dove is seen,
A speck of snowy flight,
A spot of life between
The waste below and light.

As o'er the deep it flies,
The wanderer finds no rest;
Its throbbing bosom sighs
For tree or twig — and rest.

So thou, my soul, can'st find
No place of rest for thee,
While blown by vagrant wind
Upon a shoreless sea.

In all this world of tears
What buried hopes there lie!

O tomb of buried years,
Lives there no hope in thee?

A home in Eden gone,
And ruined homes below,
A home alone is on
Destruction's ebb and flow.

Behold the ark of home,
Where thou did'st leave thy youth!
And now no longer roam —
Come back to childhood's truth.

It floats upon death's sea,
It rides on falsehood's wave,
No longer restless — see
God's ark above the grave.

A waste of waters — but this ark above,
On long, long swells will ride that place of love,
Nor blown by vagrant winds will fluttered dove
Be struggling now, but rest once more at home.
My soul shall live, no more in fear to roam
Above a sepulchre of death; while death
Will pass into a realm of life, so saith
The Lord. Thine ark will find its Ararat,
The family shall go forth and find thereat
New plains and hills for homes. The dove shall
fly
And be at home in that new earth and sky.

IN THE WHITE MOUNTAINS

I CLIMBED the lofty mountains
Amid the cloud and rain
That fell like spray from fountains
Of broken hearts of pain.

I stood upon a summit
With eyes above the storm;
Beneath, around, and on it
Saw fog in billows form.

The storm — I was within it —
But sunshine was above,
O'er lightnings flashing in it
And clouds that onward drove.

For miles around was blackness,
The crashes in the storm;
The lightnings knew no slackness
In all that raging storm.

My body was within it,
My eyes alone above,
The journey past was in it,
But here the sun was love.

And far away, near sky line,
Was "Champlain" in the sun,
With sparkling waters shining
And white sails one by one.

I saw each peaceful village
As if no storm were near,
The farmers' peaceful tillage
In sunshine — o'er me here.

It lay a sparkling jewel
In God's own circlet set,
Beyond the lightnings cruel,
Beyond the storm and wet.

And then I thought the storm-curst,
With fog around their life,
Need not quite miss the sunburst
Beyond the storm and strife.

Far, far away it lieth,
Beyond our fog and dark ;
Far from the heart that sigheth
There sails some peaceful bark.

And in each village under
The sunlit peace, I thought,
Will be no fear of thunder,
No storm with menace fraught.

The eyes alone behold it,
The soul with eyes to see ;
The arms of God enfold it —
That far off summer sea.

Here, body, storm, and duty;
 There, peace of upper day,
The king in all his beauty,
 The land of the Far Away.

THE SPIRIT OF WATER

SPIRIT bright of water —
She's the morning's daughter,
Sparkling in the dewdrops,
Dancing down in raindrops!
Tidal moons have sought her
Fleeing o'er the sea sand;
Hides she in the mist and
In the ocean water!

Floats she high in cloudland,
Where a sunbeam brought her
To her billowy throne, and
Finds she her avatar
In the rainbow's splendor,—
Arch of beauty given
To her feet to lend her
Passage down from heaven!

Steals she, vestal maiden,
At the time of snowing,
Spreads her mantle made in
Heaven, spotless, glowing;
And from ice's prison,
From her crystal hiding,
Soon she hath arisen,
Vapory airships riding!

In the storm cloud frowning,
Muttering in the gloaming,
Song in thunder drowning,
Bursts she, angry, foaming;
Bursts in cataract or torrent,
Cleaves all bonds asunder,
Rides with death abhorrent,
Spray, and hiss, and thunder!

Lives she in the current
Of the lifeblood human,
Which, with pulse concurrent,
Flows in king or yeoman!
Sparkling soul of water,
Quenching thirst and giving
All that ever sought her
Of the joy of living!

ROWING ON THE LOALLA RIVER

WHERE the low Loalla flows,
Where on hills the early rose,
Lilies of the valleys fair,
Fill an ever lulling air
With an effluence rising o'er
All the river, flowing where
River lilies line the shore;
Here our rower slowly rows
On the way the river knows,—
Rippling waters where the oar
Skims the circling wavelets o'er,
With a slowly nearing shore;

Where a fresh'ning healing air
Lieth on the flowing hair,
While the feathery ferns are nigh,
Leaning o'er where shallows lie.
Leaves in eerie whispers sigh;
With the running vines on high
Seen within the river's eye.
But some jutting rocks appear,
Tossing waters as we near,
Then away our rower rows,
Rowing, rowing on, as flows
Far away the river here.

So we sail within the reel
Of a fairy's lines, the real

Flowing on as if unreal,
While our vision seeth here,
Heareth here the inner ear,
All the fairies see or hear,
As we lie within the low,
Softly splashing waters where
Waves are swelling, falling. So
Is the way we follow won
In the yellow of the sun,
In the silence everywhere.

Soon there is a hazier sun,
Leaves are falling one by one,
With a lowering in the air,
With the silence falling o'er
All the river, as we fare
Through the lowering o'er the whole
Of this evening of the soul.
Fresher, stronger breezes blow,
Breaking waters where we go,
As the hills in shore lines rise.
In the valleys far off sighs,
Fleeing wraiths, afar off rise.

So a soughing overlies
All the hills, the vales, the leas,
All the area seen of eyes.
Erinnys is swallowing,
All the heaven. Heaven sees
Furies with their raven hair

Hovering or following!
Suddenly there comes a flash,
Lightning stroke, a thunder crash,
With reverberating roll
In the swaying of the whole,
In the hurry of the air.

There's an inner awe of soul,
There's a sense of oversoul,
Of the nearness now of One
Who in far off years was near
When, on Sinai, there was one
Laying off his shoon in fear,—
So we feel the unseen here!
Then the rain, in sudden dash,
Poureth down 'mid flame and crash,
Gusts of tempest branches lashing,
Lightning flash with blinding glare,
Crackling crashes raging there!

Distant rollings, gentler rain,
As we rise on waves in air,
Forerunners are of hours fair.
“All is o'er” is our refrain,
As we see, far, far away,
Sun rays falling. On our way
On the river, as we row,
Rises high a half an O,

Sun on "rain of higher air,"
Vanishing in vision rare
For the winners of the fray,
As we follow on our way.

Now the way in sun rays lies,
Rising, falling, in the eyes
Of the azure over all;
O'er a sudden rapid fall,
Where we glide with swifter grace
In the whirl, as in a race;
Then we row as on a face,
Fair, serene, of fairy sea,
With the far horizon free,
While we feel all frownings flee,
As the azure lieth o'er
Where our higher visions soar.

'Neath the waves we see the shore,
Lilies, hills, the azure floor,
In the river 'neath the oar.
Fishes darting to and fro,
Startled, hidden, as we row,
Half reveal the river floor,
Swaying waves on finny lair;
While on high, in sunny air,
Swallows fly alow, or soar
O'er a higher area floor
In the air so freshly rare
O'er the river, as we fare.

Slowly rowing, soon we know
We are near the other shore,
As the grasses clog the oar
And we stagger, swing around,
Caught upon a root below,—
Pushing, thumping in rebound!
Loosening so,— on, on, we row,
Soaring, rowing, flowing, oh!
On the rising waves we row,
On the falling waves we flow,
Where the willows line the shore,
With the lilies near the oar.

Roll we now on waves awhirl,
Rising on a rising swell,
Pushing on as waves upswell,
And we toss within a swirl,
Where the muddier waters whirl
Of a freshet-stream's inflow
Swelling here the waves we know;
While we feel the fairy rare
Zephyrs of the evening air,—
Æolian airs arising here,—
As on lines of zephyrs there,
We ethereal arias hear.

Rising higher, ever higher,
Rising with his swaying lyre,
Is Æolus' solo here,
Solo of a far off sphere.

But a clatter on the banks
Breaks in,—cackling poultry, ranks
Of the bellowing cattle, cranks,
Rattling, harsh, of chains where gates
Open, shut, with shouts, where waits
There the herd;—a crackling limb
On a bending tree,—a hymn,—
Bark of dog in distance dim!

Here we have the aërial flow,
O'er the river flowing slow,
Of the zephyrs, as we row,
Near us sighing, sighing low,—
Zephyrs they, as fairies flying,
Zephyrs low are o'er us sighing.
Thus we know, as on we row,
Life serene,—a river flow
On this silvery evening way,
While our years are ever flying,
While our life is ever sighing
For a love far, far away.

Rising, falling, with the flow
Of Loalla's river, so
Hourly we feel the flow
Of a welling inner flow,
Of a swelling overflow,
'Mid the outward jar and jolt,
'Mid discordant break and bolt,
As the waves forever roll,

As the fleeing æons flow
On the river here we know,
On the swells, or high, or low,
Of the River of the Soul!

INTERNATIONAL PEACE

THE hills of peace in softer splendor rise
Than war lord's palaces. The sunny sky,
The gently flowing streams, the hum of bees,
And all the arts of peaceful industry,
Than all the panoply and pomp of war
Are more divine.

Theirs is the majesty
Of One who, on His everlasting throne,
Whence flows the stream of life, with fruitful
trees,
Proclaims the ending of all curse and night,
Of pain and tears and death and war on earth,
In earth's new day.

On earth Death rideth forth,
A clanking skeleton on his pale horse,
Attendant on the heels of blood-stained War,
'Mid screech of shell, and moans of dying men,
And cannon's flash, and sinking battleship,
'Mid roar and smoke and flame; and following
him,
Doth Hell ride forth.

Let earth's new era come!
Oh, come, thou Peace of God, and, coming, flood
That earth with splendor of thy better day
When He upon the throne proclaims it new!
Oh, come, ye thousand years of happy peace,

When War and Death and Hell shall be sent
down
To the abyss!

And they shall be shut up
With him that hath deceived the nations long,
When men learn war no more, and the swords
Are beaten into plowshares, and the spears
To pruning hooks, and implements of trade
Are made from gleaming bayonets of steel,
No more blood-red.

And all who plead for peace,
And hear the Master saying, "Peace be your's,"
And breathe again the peace He left the twelve,
Will see the fore-gleam of the world-wide dawn,
Hear Christmas angels heralding the Day,
The first white phalanx of the Prince of Peace
As He rides forth.

They are the early signs,
Like Noah's dove on waves that still were wild
And tossing much in scarce quelled turbulence,
Of a new era of a cleansèd earth,
With lowing herds and arts of husbandry,
And with, on fields once fertilized with blood,
Fair seas of billowy wheat.

There was a day
When Rome sat regnant on her seven hills,
And ruled imperial by the force of arms;
O dove, in greater wise than Rome be queen,
Imperial mistress of the hearts of men,

With gentle ministries of "peace on earth,
Good will to men"!

Still be that message sung
Which, one still night, the ancient shepherds
heard,

When heavenly platoons sang it in the sky!
Oh, hear but one sweet note to-day on earth,
In this, the last of nineteen centuries,
Of that sweet melody again, the note
Of "peace on earth"!

Once more "good will to men"
Be softly sung, though haltingly — yet sung
As earliest notes of still half slumb'ring birds,
Tell of the day begun, till all the day
At last is vocal; and sweet melodies
Resound of that fair day when peaceful light
Shall flood the earth.

Sing of the day that binds
The nations with the cords of love in one,
And which no Samsons may in frenzy break;
And with vain withes of sly deceit and guile
May no Delilah-like diplomacy
Attempt with subtle art to bind as slaves,
Deceived and shorn.

Ah, then together shall
The nations all in peace lie down!
The British Lion and the unhurt Lamb;
The Eagle sheathe his talons, and the Bear
No longer seek in greed to tear in twain

The Dragon of the East, and loot his lair,
Nor slay at home.

And so shall sunny peace
Be smiling down on all the world below,
And world-wide union bring, and bring one law,
And bring one speech — the language of the
heart —

With sympathy for peoples weak and poor
Whom power, because 'tis power, not pounces
on,
As tiger on its prey.

No Circe's song
Be sung to lure to ruin this our hope,
Nor drowsy hum of idle poppy land
Where all is aimless sleep, but vigor, life,
A might that dares compel the rights of all,
A might that conquers universal peace,
A might that throttles jealousy and hate,—
This be the trumpet call!

Let sacrifice
Secure the peace of nations, for e'en Thou,
Who art the Prince of Peace, the Lord of all,
Who came to conquer peace on earth, did'st
tread
The wine press of Almighty God, alone,
With garments red, and vesture dipped in
blood,
From Bozrah come.

And so, when passion sways,
May "softer manners, gentler laws," prevail

For old world "tooth for tooth" and "blood
for blood,"

Revenge in nations, as in private men,
And helpful thoughts, and former brotherhood,
For hasty blows, or people's sudden wrath,
The law of the wild beast!

In some new court
To sit in some new fair Jerusalem,
Let ripened wisdom give with august laws,
Impartial justice, rights for all to all,
When He shall take His throne who is earth's
King,
And He shall reign whose right it is to reign,
The King of Peace.

And on that smiling day
There shall begin, at last, the golden age
Which poets rapt, and famous seers of old,
With vision peering down the bloody aisles,
Through long, long lanes of waste, rapine, and
war,
Through screams of parting, agonizing tears,
Have long foreseen.

And so let all look up,
And with brave eyes of hope see each faint hint
Of that new rising sun which, in God's dawn,
Shall flood the earth with golden years of peace
When once again will hosts of angels sing,
With joy, as o'er a soul newborn,
O'er earth newborn.

SOME LOVE SONGS FROM THE ORIENT

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

The King

The Shepherd

The Maiden, Reluctant, in the King's Palace

SOME LOVE SONGS

THE MAIDEN TO THE ABSENT SHEPHERD

Oh, kiss me with thy kisses,
With lips upon mine own!
Thy love the wine excelleth
As to the lips it wellet
In all its murmured blisses,
Intoxicating grown.
Oh, kiss me with the kisses
Of lips upon mine own!

Oh, tell me, tell me, Dearest,
My spirit's only love,
Where thou thy flock art feeding,
And where, the noontide heeding,
Dost take thy flock, when nearest
Is shade of trees above?
Oh, tell me *where*, my Dearest,
My whole heart's only love!

THE KING SPEAKS

To a steed in Pharaoh's chariot
I liken thee, my Dear,
As with arching neck she prances,
Her pawning hoofs to rear,
And thy rising neck, in ropes of pearls,
As graceful is, and fair,

And thy cheeks, beneath thy glances,
Wear plaits of glossy hair;
But with plaits of gold we'll twine them, Dear,
With studs of silver set,
And will use what wealth advances
To make them lovelier yet.

THE MAIDEN SPEAKS

But my loved one is in fragrance,
As is a bunch of myrrh,
In my bosom softly lying,
In its sweetness never dying
And he fills my breast with fragrance;
He never thence shall stir;
For my lover in his fragrance
Is precious as the myrrh.

As a cluster is of henna
Where henna-flowers grow,
In the far-off pleasant vineyards,
In Engèdi's fragrant vineyards,
In the land of wine and henna,
My love to me is — Oh,
As a cluster, he, of henna
Where henna-flowers grow!

THE KING SPEAKS

Lo, very fair my Love is,
Lo, very fair are you,
And when a dove is cooing,
And soft her mate is wooing,
The eye in that fair dove is
The tender eye in you ;
For very fair my Love is,
And eyes of doves have you !

THE MAIDEN REPLIES

Lo, fair art *thou*, my Lover,
Yea, pleasant, Dear,
When thou art near ;
And, each of us a rover,
Our couch of green,
'Mid cedars seen,
To seek repose doth call us !
The cedars there,
With boughs in air,
(Our house's beams) install us ;
Each fir tree fair
Outspreading there
Is for our house a rafter ;
Nor yet is seen
On couch of green
The dream of parting after.

A rose from Sharon taken —
 'Tis this am I
 As here I lie,
While other flowers awaken;
 A lily lorn
 From valley torn,
A lily of the valleys;
 And this was I
 When love was nigh,
Where spring her beauty rallies,
 A flower free
 On Sharon's lea
By fragrant breezes shaken;
 And thought is pain
 Of verdant plain
While I am here, forsaken.

THE KING REPLIES

As the lovely lily
Where only thorns are near
Rises, virgin lily,
So sweet and pure and clear,
So, near the city daughters
Who stand beside her here
In their stately hauteurs
Doth she, my Love, appear
Like a lily swaying,

Its tiny bells to rear,—
So my Love is staying
Where only thorns are near.

THE MAIDEN REPLIES

As the apple, rising
Amid the forest trees,
While, the fruitage prizing,
We seek it more than these,
So among the sons is
The one affection sees ;
He, 'mid lofty ones, is
The tree my heart would seize ;
Though those trees are stately,
None I love so greatly
As he, among the trees !

So beneath his shadow,
Delighted did I sit,
And the forest had no
Delights compared to it ;
Sweet the fruit there tasted,
For love I found it fit ;
Ever there I hasted
Beneath his boughs to sit,
For beneath his shadow
I rested and was glad,
And the forest had no
Such fruit as there I had.

THE MAIDEN SPEAKS

My lover is mine, and I his!
He feedeth among the lilies,
He feedeth his flock 'mid lilies;
The lilies are fair, as he is,
The flock, it is where no ill is,
The flock, it is where *he* is,
He feedeth his flock 'mid lilies;
And he is my own, and I his;
My heart is his own 'mid the lilies!

Oh, turn, till the cool of day,
Away, till the shadows flee,
Oh, turn thee, my Love, away,
And leap, as a fawn doth flee
With speed on the mountains free,
Or like a gazelle at play
That flees from the wind away;
Like fawn for thine own sake be,
Or as a gazelle doth stay
On mountains of Bethel free,
So flee from all harm away!

THE KING SPEAKS

A garden locked
Is my sister-bride,
A spring that is locked
From all others beside;

She's a fountain sealed,
And from all concealed.

This garden fair —
It has henna and nard,
Has saffron and nard,
It has calamus there,
It has cinnamon — these,
With frankincense trees.

And with all these
It has aloes and myrrh
That grow with the trees,
And beside them — in her —
The chief spices grow ;
They're the best we know !

THE MAIDEN REPLIES

Awake, O wind from northland,
And from the southland blow ;
O winds from south and northland,
Upon my garden blow ;
And so in plenteous measure
Let all its spices flow,
And let my loved one enter
My garden as his own,
And let him eat with pleasure
What grows for him alone.

THE MAIDEN SPEAKS

I am my belovèd's,
And he longeth after me!
Come then, my belovèd,
To the meadows let us flee!

Let us in the hamlets,
As we journey onward, stay;
Let us to the vineyards
At the dawning wend our way.

Let us see if blossoms
On the vines are found,
See if buds have opened
On pomegranates found.

There, with thee beside me,
My love I'll give to thee;
While the mandrakes' fragrance
Around our path shall be.

Yes, and at our portals
Every precious thing,
Newer things and older,
Unto thee I'll bring!

Hidden have I kept them,
Have kept them, Love, for thee,
As a secret treasure
To show my love for thee.

O that as a brother
Thou mightest be to me,
At my mother's bosom
Thou had'st been nursed like me!

If without I found thee,
I'd give a kiss to thee;
None would for this despise me —
A sister's kiss 'twould be!

I would lead thee, bring thee
To my mother's dwelling,
She would there instruct me
About this love upwelling.

I would give thee goblets
Of the spicèd wine,
And pomegranate juices
As my gift be thine!

THE MAIDEN SPEAKS

As a signet on thy heart
Set thou me,
As a signet on thine arm
Let me be;

For as strong as death is strong
Love can be,
And as cruel as the grave,
Jealousy;

With the flashes thereof
Flashes of fire,
As Jehovah's flame of fire
In its ire!

Many waters cannot quench
Flames of love,
Nor the floods of rivers drown
Rising love.

If a man to *purchase* love
Gave his all —
All the substance of his house,
Gave it all —
Utterly despised were he,
As the king has been by me!

THE SHEPHERD SPEAKS

O thou in the gardens dwelling,
Thy voice in its music swelling
We would hear while our love is welling!
As there stand around thee now
Companions of thy May-time,
Companions in love's daytime,
In our love's blessed playtime,
All would harken to thee now;
And I, who stand among them,
Old songs, as thou hast sung them,
Would hear thee singing now!

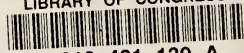
FRAGMENT OF SONG

“Do thou flee, my Lover, and be
As when a young hart or gazelle we see
On the mountains of spices, free!”

NOTE

The foregoing verses convey, in paraphrase, the exact sense of the original, and no thought is expressed or metaphor used which is not implied or used in the original. The best critical interpretation of modern scholarship is followed. It is a dramatic "Song of Songs." For many centuries an allegorical interpretation has been given to it. The maiden's pure and faithful love for the absent shepherd would be regarded as a type of spiritual love; King Solomon in his later days as the representative of the allurements of this world and of its Prince; and the shepherd as a type of Him of whom it is said, "Jehovah is my Shepherd," or of Him whom an inscription on one of the ancient tombs in the catacombs calls "The Good Shepherd, with great eyes which see on all sides." The maiden, of course, would be ancient Israel, or the Church. Many modern scholars regard the "Song" as merely an exaltation of faithful human love. In a later volume the writer hopes to paraphrase in this manner the entire poem, or series of songs, each in its proper setting.

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